

AGENDA ITEM

MARCH 54-152
Lawyer Assistance Program
2009 Annual Report

DATE: February 9, 2010

TO: Members, Board of Governors
Members, Board Committee on Member Involvement, Relations and Services

FROM: Philip Belleville, Chair, Lawyer Assistance Program Oversight Committee
Janis Thibault, Director, Lawyer Assistance Program
Richard Carlton, Special Assistant, Lawyer Assistance Program

SUBJECT: Lawyer Assistance Program 2009 Annual Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Lawyer Assistance Program ("LAP") of the State Bar of California presents the LAP 2009 Annual Report, pursuant to Senate Bill 479, due on March 1st. The Report is being printed. The Report will be distributed to you at the meeting. Board members with questions or concerns may contact Janis Thibault, 916-564-5184 or janis.thibault@calbar.ca.gov

BACKGROUND

The LAP is premised on early identification of attorneys suffering from substance abuse or mental illness. The program assists the Bar to protect the public, the courts, and the legal profession by offering education and rehabilitative programs to State Bar members. The program also works in conjunction with the State Bar Court Alternative Discipline Program to offer an alternative to traditional disciplinary sanctions. Section 6238 of SB 479 directs the Oversight Committee of the LAP to report to the Board of Governors and to the Legislature not later than March 1, 2003, and annually thereafter, on the implementation and operation of the program.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE REPORT

The LAP provided effective early intervention and made progress toward meeting the goals of the LAP Oversight Committee's Long-Range Strategic Plan during 2009. Specific challenges addressed during the year included: (1) at the direction of the Board of Governors, continuing to reduce expenditures, (2) revising the rules of the LAP to allow the program to serve an expanded pool of participants without increasing existing staffing levels, (3) revising the rules of the Financial Assistance Plan to further slow the growth of outstanding loan obligations, and (4) continuing to work with an outside agency to enhance the rate of repayment of funds previously loaned to participants by the Plan.

FISCAL IMPACT

None

BOARD BOOK/ADMINISTRATIVE MANUAL IMPACT

There is no impact on the Board Book/Administrative Manual

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

Should the Board Committee on Member Involvement, Relations and Services concur with the Lawyer Assistance Program 2009 Annual Report, it would be in order to approve the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Board Committee on Member Involvement, Relations and Services recommends that the Board of Governors receives the report and thanks staff for its submission of the Lawyer Assistance Program 2009 Annual Report, in the form attached to these minutes and made a part hereof.

Should the Board concur with the recommendation of the Board Committee on Member Involvement, Relations and Services, it would be appropriate to adopt the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Board of Governors receives the report and thanks staff for its submission of the Lawyer Assistance Program 2009 Annual Report, in the form attached to these minutes and made a part hereof.